

**OPINIONS AND DECLARATIONS  
RENDERED BY THE INTER-  
NATIONAL COMMISSION ON  
ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE**

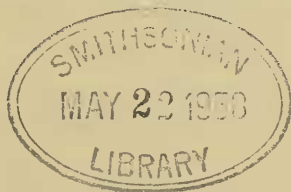
*Edited by*

**FRANCIS HEMMING, C.M.G., C.B.E.**  
Secretary to the Commission

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**OPINION 514**

Validation under the Plenary Powers of the generic  
name *Heteralocha* Cabanis, [1851] (Class Aves)



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# INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

## COMPOSITION AT THE TIME OF THE ADOPTION OF THE RULING GIVEN IN OPINION 514

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*Vice-President* : Senhor Dr. Afranio do AMARAL (*Sao Paulo, Brazil*) (12th August 1953)

*Secretary* : Mr. Francis HEMMING (*London, England*) (27th July 1948)

### B. The Members of the Commission

(Arranged in order of precedence by reference to date of election or of most recent re-election, as prescribed by the International Congress of Zoology)

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Dr. K. H. L. KEY (*Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Canberra, A.C.T., Australia*) (15th October 1954)

Dr. Alden H. MILLER (*Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, U.S.A.*) (29th October 1954)

Doc. Dr. Ferdinand PRANTL (*Národní Museum V Praze, Prague, Czechoslovakia*) (30th October 1954)

Professor Dr. Wilhelm KÜHNELT (*Zoologisches Institut der Universität, Vienna, Austria*) (6th November 1954)

Professor F. S. BODENHEIMER (*The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel*) (11th November 1954)

Professor Ernst MAYR (*Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard College, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A.*) (4th December 1954)

Professor Enrico TORTONESE (*Museo di Storia Naturale "G. Doria", Genova, Italy*) (16th December 1954)

## OPINION 514

### VALIDATION UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS OF THE GENERIC NAME "HETERALOCHA" CABANIS, [1851] (CLASS AVES)

**RULING** :—(1) The generic name *Neomorpha* Gould, 1837 (Class Aves), is hereby suppressed under the Plenary Powers for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy.

(2) The under-mentioned generic name is hereby placed on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* with the Name No. 1266 :—

*Heteralocha* Cabanis, [1851], as validated under the Plenary Powers in (1) above (gender : feminine) (type species, by original designation : *Neomorpha acutirostris* Gould, 1837).

(3) The under-mentioned specific name is hereby placed on the *Official List of Specific Names in Zoology* with the Name No. 1509 :—

*acutirostris* Gould, 1837, as published in the combination *Neomorpha acutirostris* (specific name of type species of *Heteralocha* Cabanis, [1851]).

(4) The under-mentioned generic name is hereby placed on the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology* with the Name No. 1155 :—

*Neomorpha* Gould, 1837, as suppressed under the Plenary Powers in (1) above.

## I. THE STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On 3rd October 1952 Dr. C. A. Fleming (*Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Geological Survey Office, Wellington, New Zealand*) addressed a preliminary communication to the Office of the Commission on the question of the possible use of the Plenary Powers for the purpose of validating the generic name *Heteralocha* Cabanis, [1851], the name currently in use for a New Zealand bird noted for the extreme sexual dimorphism of its bill. Various circumstances combined for some time to prevent any progress being made with this case but as the result of correspondence between the Secretary and the applicant in the winter of 1955/1956 the following definitive application was submitted to the Commission by Dr. Fleming on 2nd March 1956 :—

**Proposed validation of the generic name “Heteralocha” Cabanis, [1851], for the New Zealand Huia (Class Aves)**

By C. A. FLEMING

(*Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Wellington, New Zealand*)

The purpose of the present application is to ask the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to use its Plenary Powers to conserve the generic name *Heteralocha* Cabanis, [1851], for the New Zealand Huia (Class Aves). The facts of this case are set out in the following paragraphs.

2. Gould published the generic name *Neomorpha* twice in the year 1837. The first of these occasions was in January of that year (*Syn. Birds Austr.* (1) : pl. xi), the second in the month of June (*Proc. zool. Soc. Lond.* 4 (48) : 144). In the *Synopsis* he applied this name to two new nominal species which he named *Neomorpha acutirostris* and *Neomorpha crassirostris* respectively. It was soon discovered that these nominal species represented the female and male respectively of the Huia, a New Zealand bird noted for the extreme sexual dimorphism of its bill. This species is now known by the specific name *acutirostris* Gould, the names *crassirostris* Gould, 1837 and *gouldi* Gould, 1841, *ex Gray*, being treated as junior synonyms.

3. In 1851 Cabanis proposed the new generic name *Heteralocha* (Cabanis, [1851], in Cabanis & Heine, *Mus. Hein.* 1 : 218) as a substitute for *Neomorpha* Gould, 1837, at the same time designating *Neomorpha acutirostris* Gould as type species.

4. Most subsequent authors have erroneously considered *Neomorpha* Gould, 1837, to be a junior homonym of *Neomorphus* Gloger, 1827 (*Notizen* (Froriep) 16 : 278), and the name *Heteralocha acutirostris* (Gould, 1837) has been in general use for the Huia since 1865 not only in ornithological literature but also in general works on biology.

5. Under Article 34 of the *Règles* as amended by the Fourteenth International Congress of Zoology, Copenhagen 1953 (1953, *Copenhagen Decisions zool. Nomencl.* : 78, Decision 152) the names *Neomorpha* Gould and *Neomorphus* Gloger are not homonyms of one another and in consequence the first of these names should now replace the name *Heteralocha* Cabanis. The name for the Huia would thus revert to *Neomorpha acutirostris* Gould.

6. It is submitted that the application of the normal provisions of the *Règles* would result in an undesirable change in the name of a well-known bird, which ought to be avoided. The name *Neomorpha* was used by Gould, Gray and others from 1837 to 1855 and in the present century by Mathews & Iredale (1913, *Ibis* 1913 : 451). *Heteralocha*, on the other hand, has been used in successive revisions of the New Zealand avifauna by Buller (1865 ; 1872 ; 1882 ; 1888 ; 1905), Finsch (1872 ; 1874 ; 1888), Bowdler-Sharpe (1875), Oliver (1930) and Mathews (1930 ; 1946). The name *Heteralocha* has also been widely used in general works.

7. As convenor of the Checklist Committee of the Ornithological Society of New Zealand, I am authorised to record the unanimous opinion of the Committee that stability in nomenclature would be better served by the retention of the name *Heteralocha* than by the re-introduction of the name *Neomorpha*.

8. No family-group-name problem arises in the present case, the genus *Heteralocha* Cabanis being placed either in the family CALLAEIDAE or in the family PHILESTURNIDAE.

9. In the light of the considerations set out in the present paper, I apply to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature :—

- (1) to use its Plenary Powers to suppress the under-mentioned generic name for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy :—*Neomorpha* Gould, 1837 ;

- (2) to place the under-mentioned generic name on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology*:—*Heteralocha* Cabanis, [1851] (gender : feminine) (type species, by original designation : *Neomorpha acutirostris* Gould, 1837) ;
- (3) to place the under-mentioned specific name on the *Official List of Specific Names in Zoology* :—*acutirostris* Gould, 1837, as published in the combination *Neomorpha acutirostris* (specific name of type species of *Heteralocha* Cabanis, [1851]) ;
- (4) to place on the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology* the generic name specified in (1) above as there suppressed under the Plenary Powers.

## II. THE SUBSEQUENT HISTORY OF THE CASE

**2. Registration of the present application :** Upon the receipt of Dr. Fleming's preliminary communication, the question of the possible use of the Plenary Powers to validate the generic name *Heteralocha* Cabanis, [1851], was allotted the Registered Number Z.N.(S.) 720.

**3. Support received prior to publication :** At the time of the communication to the office of the Commission of the preliminary statement referred to in the first paragraph of the present *Opinion* Dr. Fleming addressed a note on this subject to the serial publication *Ibis*. This led to the communication to the Office of the Commission of notes of support for the action proposed from six ornithologists (New Zealand, five ; U.S.A., one). The communications so received are reproduced in the immediately following paragraphs.

**4. Support received from Ernst Mayr (Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard College, Cambridge, Mass., U.S.A.) :** On 27th October 1952 Professor Ernst Mayr (*Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard College, Cambridge, Mass., U.S.A.*) addressed the following letter of support to the Office of the Commission (Mayr, 1956, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **12** : 141) :

I believe that the Ornithological Society of New Zealand has submitted a petition to the International Commission to place the name *Heteralocha* on the *Official List* of valid names, and to place the name *Neomorpha* on the *Official Index* of rejected names.

I wholeheartedly endorse this proposal. The name *Heteralocha* has been used for nearly a century not only in the ornithological literature, but in the biological as well. This is the genus with the remarkable sexual dimorphism of bill structure, and for this unique property it has been illustrated in numerous text-books, and treatises on evolution and ecology. Discarding the well-known name *Heteralocha* would only lead to confusion.

**5. Support received from E. G. Turbott (Auckland War Memorial Museum, Newmarket, New Zealand) :** On 5th March 1956 Dr. E. G. Turbott (*Auckland War Memorial Museum, Newmarket, New Zealand*) addressed the following note of support to the Office of the Commission (Turbott, 1956, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **12** : 141) :—

I should like to record my support for the application of Fleming that the Commission should use its Plenary Powers to set aside the generic name *Neomorpha* Gould, 1837, in favour of the name *Heteralocha* Cabanis, [1851], for the New Zealand bird known as the Huia. *Heteralocha* has now been in general use for some 90 years.

**6. Support received from R. B. Sibson (King's College, Auckland, New Zealand) :** On 6th March 1956 Dr. R. B. Sibson (*King's College, Auckland, New Zealand*) addressed the following note of support to the Office of the Commission (Sibson, 1956, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **12** : 141) :—

I should like to record my support for the application of Fleming that the Commission should use its Plenary Powers to set aside the generic name *Neomorpha* Gould, 1837, in favour of the name *Heteralocha* Cabanis, [1851], for the New Zealand bird known as the Huia.

Dr. Fleming is especially qualified to speak on this matter. He is an authority on the taxonomy of New Zealand birds and was convener of the New Zealand Checklist Committee.

**7. Support received from B. J. Marples (Otago University, New Zealand) :** On 6th March 1956 Professor B. J. Marples (*Otago University, New Zealand*) addressed the following note of support to the Office of the Commission (Marples, 1956, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **12** : 142) :—

I should like to record my support for the application of Fleming that the Commission should use its Plenary Powers to set aside the generic name *Neomorpha* Gould, 1837, in favour of the name *Heteralocha* Cabanis, [1851], for the New Zealand bird known as the Huia.

**8. Support received from W. R. B. Oliver (Seatoun, Wellington, New Zealand) :** On 12th March 1956 Mr. W. R. B. Oliver (*Seatoun, Wellington, New Zealand*) addressed the following letter of support to the Office of the Commission (Oliver, 1956, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **12** : 142) :—

I should like to record my support for the application of Fleming that the Commission should use its Plenary Powers to set aside the generic name *Neomorpha* Gould, 1837, in favour of the name *Heteralocha* Cabanis, [1851], for the New Zealand bird known as the Huia.

As the name *Heteralocha* has been in general use for about 100 years it would cause a good deal of confusion to supersede it by *Neomorpha*. I have adopted *Heteralocha* in the last edition (1955) of my book on *New Zealand Birds*.

**9. Support received from R. A. Falla (Dominion Museum, Wellington, New Zealand) :** On 12th March 1956 Dr. R. A. Falla (*Dominion Museum, Wellington, New Zealand*) addressed the following note to the Office of the Commission in support of the present case (Falla, 1956, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **12** : 142) :—

I should like to record my support for the application of Fleming that the Commission should use its Plenary Powers to set aside the generic name *Neomorpha* Gould, 1837, in favour of the name *Heteralocha* Cabanis, [1851], for the New Zealand bird known as the Huia.

**10. Publication of the present application :** The present application was sent to the printer on 20th April 1956 and was published on 20th July of that year in Part 5 of Volume 12 of the *Bulletin*



of *Zoological Nomenclature* (Fleming, 1956, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **12** : 139—140). The seven communications in support of the present application received prior to its publication were published simultaneously therewith on the pages severally specified in paragraphs 3 to 9 above.

**11. Issue of Public Notices :** Under the revised procedure prescribed by the Thirteenth International Congress of Zoology, Paris, 1948 (1950, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **4** : 51—56), Public Notice of the possible use by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature of its Plenary Powers in the present case was given on 20th July 1956 (a) in Part 5 of Volume 12 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature* (the Part in which Dr. Fleming's application was published) and (b) to the other prescribed serial publications. In addition, such Notice was given to four general zoological serial publications and to twelve ornithological serials in various parts of the world.

**12. Support received after publication from Dean Amadon (The American Museum of Natural History, New York) :** After publication the comments previously received on this case (paragraphs 4—9 above) were supplemented by one further communication. This was the following letter dated 21st August 1956 in which Dr. Dean Amadon (*The American Museum of Natural History, New York*) intimated his support for the action recommended by Dr. Fleming (Amadon, 1956, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **12** : 318) :—

I am writing to express my approval of two applications to stabilize certain names in ornithology now before the Commission. One of these, submitted by Dr. C. A. Fleming, seeks to retain the generic name *Heteralocha* for the unique New Zealand Bird commonly known as *huia*. I agree with Dr. Fleming and those who have supported his motion that this species of bird is so often mentioned in general biological literature that it would be extremely unfortunate if the scientific name were changed. For this reason if for no other, the name *Heteralocha* should be retained.

**13. No Objection Received :** No objection to the action proposed in the present case was received from any source.

### III. THE DECISION TAKEN BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

**14. Issue of Voting Paper V.P.(57)17 :** On 15th February 1957 a Voting Paper (V.P.(57)17) was issued in which the Members of the Commission were invited to vote either for, or against, " the proposal relating to the generic name *Heteralocha* Cabanis, [1851] (Class Aves), as set out in Points (1) to (4) in paragraph 9 on page 140 of Volume 12 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature* " [i.e. in the paragraph numbered as above in the application reproduced in the first paragraph of the present *Opinion*].

**15. The Prescribed Voting Period :** As the foregoing Voting Paper was issued under the Three-Month Rule, the Prescribed Voting Period closed on 15th May 1957.

**16. Particulars of the Voting on Voting Paper V.P.(57)17 :** At the close of the Prescribed Voting Period, the state of the voting on Voting Paper V.P.(57)17 was as follows :—

- (a) *Affirmative Votes had been given by the following twenty-three (23) Commissioners (arranged in the order in which Votes were received) :*

Boschma ; Mayr ; Lemche ; Hering ; Prantl ; Holthuis ;  
Bonnet ; Mertens ; Dymond ; Vokes ; Bodenheimer ;  
Bradley (J.C.) ; Key ; Riley ; Stoll ; Esaki ; do Amaral ;  
Hemming ; Kühnelt ; Jaczewski ; Tortonese ; Sylvester-  
Bradley ; Miller ;

- (b) *Negative Votes, one (1) :*  
Cabrerá ;

- (c) *Prevented from voting by the interruption of postal communications consequent upon political disturbances, one (1) :*

Hankó ;

- (d) *Voting Papers not returned :*

None.

**17. Declaration of Result of Vote :** On 16th May 1957, Mr. Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission, acting as Returning Officer for the Vote taken on Voting Paper V.P.(57)17, signed a Certificate that the Votes cast were as set out in paragraph 16 above and declaring that the proposal submitted in the foregoing Voting Paper and been duly adopted and that the decision so taken was the decision of the International Commission in the matter aforesaid.

**18. Preparation of the Ruling given in the present "Opinion" :** On 5th January 1958 Mr. Hemming prepared the Ruling given in the present *Opinion* and at the same time signed a Certificate that the terms of that Ruling were in complete accord with those of the proposal approved by the International Commission in its Vote on Voting Paper V.P.(57)17.

**19. Original References :** The following are the original references for the generic and specific names placed on *Official Lists* and *Official Indexes* by the Ruling given in the present *Opinion* :—

*acutirostris*, *Neomorpha*, Gould, January 1837, *Syn. Birds Austr.* (1) : pl. xi [also *id.*, June 1837, *Proc. zool. Soc. Lond.* 4 (48) : 144]

*Heteralocha* Cabanis, [1851], in Cabanis & Heine, *Mus. Hein.* 1 : 218

*Neomorpha* Gould, January 1837, *Syn. Birds Austr.* (1) : pl. xi [also *id.*, June 1837, *Proc. zool. Soc. Lond.* 4 (48) : 144]

**20. Family-Group-Name Aspects :** No family-group-name problem arises in the present case, the genus *Heteralocha* Cabanis being currently placed in the family PHILESTURNIDAE.

**21. Compliance with Prescribed Procedures :** The prescribed procedures were duly complied with by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature in dealing with the

present case, and the present *Opinion* is accordingly hereby rendered in the name of the said International Commission by the under-signed Francis Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, in virtue of all and every the powers conferred upon him in that behalf.

22. “ *Opinion* ” Number : The present *Opinion* shall be known as *Opinion* Five Hundred and Fourteen (514) of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature.

DONE in London, this Fifth day of January, Nineteen Hundred and Fifty-Eight.

*Secretary to the International Commission  
on Zoological Nomenclature*

**FRANCIS HEMMING**